114 In a paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, under the title "The Mother's Brother in South Africa," Professor R. Brown deals at length with the facts related above and strongly opposes the matriarchy hypothesis. In his opinion the peculiar relation of a nephew with his maternal uncle is the result of the natural tenderness and indulgence which characterises the relation of a mother and her child. The feelings of the child towards its mother are extended to all the relatives of the mother, and a certain pattern of behaviour is thus created, the behaviour of a ntukulu towards all his bakokwana.

I cannot here enter upon a full discussion of Mr. Brown's theory, but I must confess that it does not seem to me entirely satisfactory. I will mention only three reasons why I find myself unable to accept it :

1) If the peculiar relation existing between a child and his bakokwana really originated from the feelings of that child towards his mother, feelings which are extended to all her relatives, why should the *paternal* grandfather and grandmother be classified amongst the bakokwana as well as the maternal relatives ? (See p. 227, 235.)

604 2) There is a term which Mr. Brown's theory does not explain, the word *nyiketa*, which is the technical expression used by the Thongas to describe the part played by the uterine nephew in the ceremonies connected with the adjudication of the inheritance. My distinguished opponent, summing up what I wrote on the subject, says: "The nephew claims some of the property of his mother's brother when the latter dies, and may sometimes claim one of the widows." There is much more than that in the Thonga custom. The nephew *nyiketa* the inheritance to the sons of his mother's brother, who are the actual legal heirs. Nyiketa comes from nyika, to give. It is a derivative which reinforces the meaning of the simple form nyika, and may be translated by the English word *surrender* or *transmit*. What does it mean in this connection ? It means that, consciously or unconnsciously, the nephew considers himself as the legitimate heir ; but on account of a change which has taken place in the laws of the tribe, as the recognised heirs are now the sons, he gives up his right and transmits it to the sons. The fact that he does so is best explained by the supposition that he possessed that right in a previous phase of family relations. I do not see how this "nyiketa" could be accounted for if these customs were dictated only by the natural feelings of a child towards his mother, feelings which nad been extended to the mother's brother.

3) In the Rev. Ed. W. Smith's book on the Ba-Ila speaking people (Vol. I, p. 317) we see that amongst the Ba-Ila the mother's brother "is

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p 622

CONCLUSION

121 I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African
114 tribe in its principal manifestations, social, mental and spiritual. In
174 order to write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thongas. This would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric measurements, which have been published in the *Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie* of 1917, together with an explanation kindly written by Dr. E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competency in this domain is well-known. I now come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I shall try in these final pages to answer two great questions, one appertaining to Science: How far can the present-day South Africans be described as Primitives? the other, of greater practical importance: How far can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by twentieth-century civilisation?